

CLAIMS

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1. A framework in connection with an organization having a plurality of entities, the framework defining a minimum set of requirements that all entities within the organization must adhere to when acquiring an information technology (IT) product, the framework comprising:

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a first policy that each entity of the organization must follow the framework;

a second policy defining a business process that each entity must follow when acquiring an IT product;

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a third policy defining a set of tools for being employed to implement the business process of the second policy; and

a fourth policy defining additional requirements specific to one or more of the entities within the organization, where the additional requirements for each entity are defined by such entity.

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2. The framework of claim 1 further comprising a policy that different entities within the organization must work together to acquire the IT product when such IT product is substantially common to such different entities.

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3. The framework of claim 1 wherein the second policy further comprises a common set of definitions of all rules and responsibilities for the entities when acquiring an IT product.

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4. The framework of claim 1 wherein the third policy includes forms that are to be used during each stage of the business process of the second policy.

5. The framework of claim 4 wherein the third policy is embodied as a central repository accessible by all of the entities within the organization.

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6. The framework of claim 5 wherein the repository is a database accessible by way of an electronic web page.

7. The framework of claim 1 wherein the first, second, and third policies are common to all entities within the organization 10, and wherein the fourth policy is specific to each entity within the organization.

8. The framework of claim 1 wherein the business process of the second policy comprises:

15 initiating a business idea regarding acquiring an IT product, the business idea being based on factors including available technology and a rough feasibility estimate of cost and benefit;

developing the rough estimate into a detailed estimate including a cost of and a benefit of acquiring the IT product, the detailed estimate 20 being employed to decide if and how to acquire the IT product and coinciding with composing a proposal including a funding request for funding from the organization for acquiring the IT product;

submitting the proposal to a centralized prioritizing agent for the organization, the centralized prioritizing agent performing a prioritization 25 process including examining all proposals within the organization and determining whether to approve each proposal based on factors including need, cost, available funding, and priority;

upon receiving approval from the centralized prioritizing agent, developing requirements and planning for the IT product to be acquired by 30 specifying the IT product in a more technologically specific manner; and

receiving delivery of the IT product.

- 5           9.     The framework of claim 8 wherein each entity has a desired technology state referred to during the business process, the desired technology state defining where the entity is desired to be in a technological sense, and wherein the business process includes determining that acquiring the IT product goes toward a business solution that is needed for achieving the desired technology state.
- 10           10.    The framework of claim 9 wherein the desired technology state for each entity is pre-defined and obtained from a model that takes factors selected from a group consisting of infrastructure, data, common systems, business units, customer interfaces, and combinations thereof.
- 15           11.    The framework of claim 10 wherein the model takes into account that different entities within the organization can have IT requirements and operations.
- 20           12.    The framework of claim 10 wherein in the business process, the centralized prioritizing agent determines from the model 26 whether the IT product proposed for acquisition is common to entities other than the entity that submitted the proposal, and if so communicates with all of such entities to ensure that such will satisfy needs of every such entity.
- 25           13.    The framework of claim 8 wherein in the business process, the centralized prioritizing agent refers to the desired technology state for the entity 12 ensure that the IT product proposed for acquisition furthers achieving the desired technology state for the entity.

14. The framework of claim 8 wherein in the business process, the requirements and planning for the IT product are developed with input from technologically oriented members of the acquiring entity regarding how the IT product should be developed and how the IT product should perform, and with  
5 input from business oriented members of the acquiring entity regarding what the IT product should do and the purpose of the IT product.

15. The framework of claim 8 wherein in the business process, the proposal is revisited to determine the reasonableness thereof and, if no longer  
10 valid, another proposal is submitted.

16. The framework of claim 8 wherein in the business process, receiving delivery includes managing and monitoring development of the IT product by a vendor to ensure that all specifications for the IT product are  
15 satisfied.

17. The framework of claim 8 wherein the business process further comprises closure, including assessing acquiring the IT product.

20 18. A business process in connection with an organization having a plurality of entities, the business process performed by each entity when acquiring an IT product and comprising:

initiating a business idea regarding acquiring the IT product, the business idea being based on factors including available technology and a  
25 rough feasibility estimate of cost and benefit;

developing the rough estimate into a detailed estimate including a cost of and a benefit of acquiring the IT product, the detailed estimate being employed to decide if and how to acquire the IT product and coinciding with composing a proposal including a funding request for funding from the  
30 organization for acquiring the IT product;

submitting the proposal to a centralized prioritizing agent for the organization, the centralized prioritizing agent performing a prioritization process including examining all proposals within the organization and determining whether to approve each proposal based on factors including need, cost,

5 available funding, and priority;

upon receiving approval from the centralized prioritizing agent, developing requirements and planning for the IT product to be acquired by specifying the IT product in a more technologically specific manner; and

receiving delivery of the IT product.

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19. The framework of claim 18 wherein each entity has a desired technology state referred to during the business process, the desired technology state defining where the entity is desired to be in a technological sense, and wherein the business process includes determining that acquiring the IT product goes toward a business solution that is needed for achieving the desired technology state.

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20. The framework of claim 19 wherein the desired technology state for each entity is pre-defined and obtained from a model that takes factors selected from a group consisting of infrastructure, data, common systems, business units, customer interfaces, and combinations thereof.

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21. The framework of claim 20 wherein the model takes into account that different entities within the organization can have IT requirements and operations.

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22. The framework of claim 20 wherein in the business process, the centralized prioritizing agent determines from the model 26 whether the IT product proposed for acquisition is common to entities other than the entity that

submitted the proposal, and if so communicates with all of such entities to ensure that such will satisfy needs of every such entity.

23. The framework of claim 18 wherein in the business process,  
5 the centralized prioritizing agent refers to the desired technology state for the entity 12 ensure that the IT product proposed for acquisition furthers achieving the desired technology state for the entity.

24. The framework of claim 18 wherein in the business process,  
10 the requirements and planning for the IT product are developed with input from technologically oriented members of the acquiring entity regarding how the IT product should be developed and how the IT product should perform, and with input from business oriented members of the acquiring entity regarding what the IT product should do and the purpose of the IT product.

25. The framework of claim 18 wherein in the business process,  
15 the proposal is revisited to determine the reasonableness thereof and, if no longer valid, another proposal is submitted.

26. The framework of claim 18 wherein in the business process,  
20 receiving delivery includes managing and monitoring development of the IT product by a vendor to ensure that all specifications for the IT product are satisfied.

27. The framework of claim 18 wherein the business process  
25 further comprises closure, including assessing acquiring the IT product.